

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Allowable Subject Matter

Examiner has indicated that claims 9-11 and 13-15 are objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant thanks Examiner for indicating the allowability of these claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, Examiner rejects claims 1-7, 12, and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 2,683,972 to Atkinson (hereafter Atkinson) in view of US Patent 3,259,145 to Engle (hereafter Engle). The claims are above amended to specifically reference primary condensables depleted fluid outlets for the primary separator, and the production of a primary condensables depleted fluid stream in the method. In the response to the final Office action, it was pointed out that the Examiner has failed to provide a *prima facie* basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) because there is no teaching or suggestion in these references of the "liquefied and/or solidified condensables enriched fluid outlet" of the independent claims of the present application. IN response, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner claims that the vortex tube of Atkinson is structurally the same as the condensables enriched fluid outlet. This is not correct because there is no structure within the vortex tube to make a condensables enriched fluid. The present amendment more clearly differentiates the present invention by requiring that the primary separator produce both a condensables enriched fluid and a condensables depleted fluid. The vortex tubes of the prior art clearly produce only one fluid, and therefore fail to provide a *prima facie* basis for rejection of the present claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Dependent claims 2-7, 12 and 16-19 depend from either claim 1 or claim 17 and include all the limitations of the independent claims. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-7, 12, and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn and the claims formally allowed at this time.

Conclusion

Applicants have addressed each and every objection and ground for rejection. The amended claims are patentable over the cited art and Applicants request that the application be allowed. In the event the Examiner has any questions or there are any issues with respect to the application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number below prior to the issuance of any written action.

Respectfully submitted,
Hillegonda Bakker et al.

By _____
P.O. Box 2463
Houston, Texas 77252-2463
Patent Attorney, Del S. Christensen
Registration No. 33,482
(713) 241-3997